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## **March 2001 Address to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee**

**By**

**Secretary of State Colin L. Powell**

[The following has been extracted from a testimony presented to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., 8 March 2001.]

I think before going into a very short version of my prepared statement, I would like to talk to some of the foreign policy issues that Senator Biden raised because, for the most part, I am here to talk about the budget, but of course we can talk about any issues that members wish to talk about. Let me start with Iraq. Iraq and the situation in Iraq was the principal purpose of my trip throughout the Persian Gulf and Middle East area the week before last. When we took over on the 20th of January, I discovered that we had an Iraq policy that was in disarray, and the sanctions part of that policy was not just in disarray, it was falling apart. We were losing support for the sanctions regime that has served so well over the last ten years. With all of the ups and downs and with all of the difficulties that are associated that regime, it was falling apart. It has been successful. Saddam Hussein has not been able to rebuild his army, notwithstanding claims that he has. He has fewer tanks in his inventory today than he had ten years ago. Even though we know he is working on weapons of mass destruction, we know he has things squirreled away; at the same time we have not seen that capacity emerge to present a full-fledged threat to us.

So I think credit has to be given to the United Nations and to the Permanent 5 and to the nations in the region for putting in place a regime that has kept him pretty much in check. What I found on the 20th of January, however, was that regime was collapsing. More and more nations were saying let's just get rid of the sanctions, let's not worry about inspectors, let's just forget it. There was all kinds of leakage from the front line states, whether it was through Syria, through Jordan, through Turkey, or down through the Persian Gulf with the smuggling of oil.

And so what I felt we had to do was to start taking a look at these sanctions, remember what they were oriented to in the first place. With respect to the sanctions let's call what the United Nations does basket one. It has nothing to do with regime change. That is U.S. policy. That is U.S. policy that lets us put in basket two, the no-fly zone, or in basket three, Iraqi opposition activities.

My immediate concern was basket one, the U.N. basket, and how it was falling apart. And it seemed to me the first thing we had to do was to change the nature of the debate. We were being accused and we were taking on the burden of hurting Iraqi people, hurting Iraqi children, and we needed to turn that around. The purpose of these sanctions was to go after weapons of mass destruction. That's why they were put in place in the first instance at the end of the Gulf War.

So let us start talking about how the Iraqi regime is threatening children, their own children and the children of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait and Syria and all over the region, how they were in danger of what Saddam Hussein was doing, and take away the argument he was using against us.

In order to make sure that that carried forward, we then had to take a look at the sanctions themselves. Were they being used to go after weapons of mass destruction and was that the way they were connected to our original goals, or, increasingly, were those sanctions starting to look as if they were hurting the Iraqi people? And it seems to me one approach to this was to go to those sanctions and eliminate those items in the sanctions regime that really were of civilian use and benefited people, and focus them exclusively on weapons of mass destruction and items that

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could be directed toward the development of weapons of mass destruction. I carried that message around the region and I found that our Arab friends in the region, as well as members of the Permanent 5 in the United Nations, as well as a number of my colleagues in NATO, found this to be a very attractive approach and that we should continue down this line. And so we are continuing down this line that says let's see if there is a better way to use these sanctions to go after weapons of mass destruction and take away the argument we have given him that we are somehow hurting the Iraqi people. He is hurting the Iraqi people, not us. There is more than enough money available to the regime now to take care of the needs they have. No more money comes in as a result of a change to this new kind of sanctions policy, but there is greater flexibility for the regime if they choose to use that flexibility to take care of the needs of its people.

How do we get out of this regime ultimately? The inspectors have to go back in. If he wants to get out of this, if he wants to regain control of the oil-for-food escrow accounts, the only way that can happen is for the inspectors to go back in. But rather than us begging him to let the inspectors in, the burden is now on him. We control the money; we will continue to restrict weapons of mass destruction; you no longer have an argument, Mr. Iraqi Regime, that we are hurting your people. You let the inspectors in and we can start to get out of this. If the inspectors get in, do their job, we are satisfied with their first look at things, maybe we can suspend the sanctions. And then at some point way in the future, when we are absolutely satisfied there are no such weapons around, then maybe we can consider lifting. But that is a long way in the future.

So this was not an effort to ease the sanctions; this was an effort to rescue the sanctions policy that was collapsing. We discovered that we were in an airplane that was heading to a crash, and what we have done and what we are trying to do is to pull it out of that dive and put it on an altitude that is sustainable, bring the coalition back together. As part of this approach to the problem, we would also make sure that the Iraqi regime understood that we reserve the right to strike militarily any activity out there, any facility we find that is inconsistent with their obligations to get rid of such weapons of mass destruction.

That takes care of the U.N. piece. On the no-fly zone, we are reviewing our policies to see if we are operating those in the most effective way possible. And with respect to the Iraqi opposition activities, we are supporting those. Our principal avenue of support is with the Iraqi National Congress, and last week I released more of the money that had been made available to us by the Congress for their activities. And we are looking at what more we can support and what other opposition activities are available that we might bring into this strategy of regime change.

And so I think it is a comprehensive, full review to bring the coalition back together, put the burden on the Iraqi regime, keep focused on weapons of mass destruction and keep him isolated and make sure that he is contained. And hopefully, the day will come when circumstances will allow a regime change that will be better for the world.

I hope that the members of the committee will examine this approach as we develop it further, and I hope that you will find a basis upon which you can support it.

Senator Biden also mentioned NATO. I am very pleased that we have solid relations with NATO. There were some irritants in the relationship, and I think those have been taken care of.

With respect to the President's meeting with Kim Dae Jung yesterday, I think it was a very good meeting. They had a good exchange of views. The President expressed his support for President Kim Dae Jung's efforts to open North Korea. It is a regime that is despotic; it is broken. We have no illusions about this regime. We have no illusions about the nature of the gentleman who runs North Korea. He is a despot, but he is also sitting on a failed society that has to

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somehow begin opening if it is not to collapse. Once it is opened, it may well collapse anyway. And so we support what President Kim Dae Jung is doing.

At the same time, President Bush expressed in the strongest possible terms yesterday our concerns about their efforts toward development of weapons of mass destruction and the proliferation of such weapons and missiles and other materials to other nations, not only in the region but around the world. North Korea is a major source of proliferation.

And as we look at the elements of the negotiation that the previous administration had left behind, there are some things there that are very promising. What was not there was a monitoring and verification program of the kind that we would have to have in order to move forward in negotiations with such a regime.

And so what the President was saying yesterday is that we are going to take our time, we are going to put together a comprehensive policy, and in due course, at a time and at a pace of our choosing, we will decide and determine how best to engage with the North Korean regime. But it was a good meeting, and I think the two presidents had a very candid exchange of views. And we look forward to more exchanges of views with the South Koreans as we move forward, as well as with the Japanese, so we can move forward together even though we may be on separate tracks from time to time.

Mr. Chairman, I will stop there on foreign policy issues and just briefly touch on what we are trying to do in this budget. As you know, there are many ways that the President engages in foreign policy. Sometimes it is meeting such as he held yesterday with President Kim Dae Jung or meetings he has held with President Fox and held with Prime Minister Chretien of Canada. Sometimes it is sending the Secretary of State whizzing around the world, seven countries in four days. That gets a lot of news.

But the real work of foreign policy is not accomplished just by presidents or by secretaries of state. It is done by the thousands of dedicated Americans who have signed up to serve in the foreign service, to serve as civil servants, to serve as foreign service nationals for those are not Americans representing us around the world. And it is theirs that is the daily grind of foreign policy, punctuated by the occasional thrill and excitement of a diplomatic success. And their activities range from the minor to the sublime, from the courteous handling of a visa application to the inking of a treaty limiting arm control or eliminating conventional arms in Europe.

And I am saying to you, Mr. Chairman, something that you and the members of the committee already know, there are no finer groups of Americans anywhere in the world who represent our interests as well. And it is our obligation to give them the resources they need. I have seen how we try to take care of our military folks. I mentioned this to you at the last hearing how places like Camp Bondsteel look so great when you go over to the Balkans. We ought to make sure that all of our State Department facilities look as great as those military facilities. And I think the budget that we have presented to you, with the increases that I have proposed, start moving us in that direction. We are making strides in classified information technology. We are making sure that our people have access to the internet. We are doing all we can to get a handle on embassy construction. I am especially grateful to a former member of this committee, Senator Grams, for his part in conceiving the five-year authorization of embassy funds. I am very pleased that two and a half years after the bombing in Kenya and Tanzania, we are well on our way to re-establishing our presence there. We have other embassies that are state of the art that are coming up out of the ground now. So we have a lot going on. But I think we can do a better job of managing our embassy construction program.

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It is for that reason that I went out and tried to find the best person I could to come in and help me in the department. I have acquired the services of a retired major general in the United States Army. Retired Major General Charles E. Williams is from the Corps of Engineers. He built Fort Drum, New York. He built the Dulles Greenway not far from here. He has brought projects to life all over the world and he knows this business. And he is coming in to serve as the new head of our foreign buildings office. I am going to move it out from under its current location so that I can have more direct reporting responsibility to me and to the Under Secretary for Management.

And General Williams' instructions are get out there, find out what we need to fix in the management of this account. And we want to get rid of the bureaucracy. We want to find private ways of doing things. This is a first step toward perhaps ultimately going in the direction of the Kaden Commission recommendation, which would move it entirely out of the department. I am not there yet, got a long way to go. But this, I think, is an aggressive first step in showing the kind of leadership I want the department to see, that we have identified a problem in that operation, went out and got a leader who is skilled, not just a political appointee, but somebody who knows how to get this job done given him the political mandate to do it. And I'm sure that General Williams will do a good job that will make us all proud.

So, Mr. Chairman, that is the kind of thing we are doing, the kind of thing we are going to do to get our information infrastructure fixed to make sure that 30,000 desks throughout the State Department are wired for unclassified access to the internet. This budget will do that. And then we will start working on classified access to the internet. We are going to make sure that our people are state of the art.

We are going to make sure that if an ambassador somewhere out there needs to get something from the Foreign Broadcast Information Service, he is not going to wait for something to be faxed or mailed to him, he's going to be able to bring it out of the ether, on-line, instantaneously, as he needs it. We are going to get into the state of the art with the State Department. Mr. Chairman, I want our people to be supported as well as all of our soldiers and sailors and airmen and Marines. And we are going to make sure that happens in the years ahead. The President's budget also provides money to hire a number of new foreign service officers. We are below the number we need to get the job done. One of the things we are going to do with this new budget is to create a float. We do not have a float in the department. We always are robbing Peter to pay Paul when a new mission comes along. I need a float, just as we had in the military, so people can go to training, so that there is always a little reserve capacity where people can go off to school and get the additional skills that they need without us vacating a position somewhere in an embassy or in an important office here in Washington.

So we are going to increase the number of foreign service officers. We are going to create a float so they can get the training that they need. And you are going to see, Mr. Chairman, that the budget also provides for the kinds of things that really advance our foreign policy programs aimed at restoring peace, building democracy in civil societies, safeguarding human rights, tackling nonproliferation and counter-terrorism challenges, addressing global health and environmental issues, responding to disasters and promoting economic reform.

The budget expands counter-drug, alternative development, and government reform programs in the Andean region. It helps provide military assistance to Israel to meet cash flow needs. It will fund all of the scheduled payments that are due in 2002 to the multilateral development banks and the U.S. commitment to the heavily indebted poor countries. It increases funding for migration and refugee assistance, for HIV-AIDS one of the biggest problems facing the world today, trafficking in women, basic education for children.

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And with respect to trafficking in women and children, let me take this opportunity to thank Senator Brownback for his work in this effort, and for the amendment that you offered last year, Senator. That was successful and added \$10 million in economic support funds for efforts in the Sudan to protect civilians from attacks and from slave trades.

Mr. Chairman, the President's budget for 2002 also provides money to support peacekeeping operations, supports political and economic transitions in Africa with emphasis on countries such as Nigeria and South Africa. As I go into these sorts of programs, I'm going to be trying to invest in those countries that have made the necessary changes that put them on the path of democracy and the free enterprise system and not keep propping up despots who won't move in the right direction. The Cold War is over. We don't need to prop up those kinds of institutions and countries any longer.

And so, Mr. Chairman, I think it is a budget that moves in the direction of freedom and democracy and supporting those efforts. It will help to reduce the risks presented by international terrorism. It will help halt the spread of weapons of mass destruction by providing stronger international safeguards on civilian nuclear activity. We are also going to increase funding for the Peace Corps. And I know Senator Dodd has a particular interest in that.

As I noted earlier, we are also going to provide additional money, not for Plan Colombia, *per se*, but to regionalize our activities so that Plan Colombia just does not become a snapshot, but it is part of a broader strategy for the region.

Mr. Chairman, I can also say to you that I am going to work hard to carve out needless layers within the State Department. I know that the committee has an intense interest in organizational activities and streamlining activities in the Department, and I am going to be on top of that. But I think that all begins with leadership. It begins with putting a team together. It begins with communicating throughout the Department that we are a team. We are going to be linked together on the basis of trust.

When you have got that all going, Mr. Chairman, then you can start to make the organizational changes that I think will be needed and are needed to make sure that the Department is relevant to the needs of the nation and the needs of the world in the 21st century.